



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 31 Years of Leadership & Advocacy

www.laccod.org



MEMBERS

Janet A. Neal
Chair

Richard O. Krzyzanowski
Vice Chair

Kecia B. Weller
Treasurer

Mary Chambers
Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr.
Michael G. Gureckas
Donna Pomerantz
Harley D. Rubenstein
Bernard Siegel
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost
Wendy L. Welt
Sheila D. Wright

MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, June 20, 2007, at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 140 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Neal at 1:21 p.m. Introduction of Commissioners, staff and audience members followed.

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 16, 2007 MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Siegel, seconded by Treasurer Weller, and duly carried, the minutes for the meeting of May 16, 2007 were approved with the following corrections:

Page 11, ATTENDANCE

Unexcused Excused

Mary Chambers
Sheila Wright

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sandy Eisenberg, President of Total Recall Realtime Captioning, reported on the case of Samantha Solorzano, a 16-year-old deaf sophomore student, who is being denied real-time captioning by Glendora Unified School District. An Administrative Law Judge heard their case in March 2007, and the judgment was pronounced in favor of the student. In May 2007, the School District appealed the judgment.

Articles about the story have been written in several publications. Additionally, it has aired on television news programs. Ms. Eisenberg is working with Samantha's mother to help support Samantha's need for captioning services in the classroom.

Linda Block reported that the Senate did not pass the comprehensive worker/guest worker programs and amnesty. However, the Senate chose to resurrect it, and will vote on it again. Its passing would negatively impact Medi-Cal, SSI, Section 8, and other benefits.

She discussed a Judicial Watch lawsuit against the City of Los Angeles challenging the use of taxpayer funds to support the Los Angeles Police Department's "sanctuary" policy, which prohibits police officers from inquiring about a person's citizenship or immigration status or notifying federal immigration authorities about an illegal alien's immigration status. Judicial Watch's website address is www.judicialwatch.org.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Neal thanked the Commission for their support during her term as Chair and presented Certificates of Appreciation Vice Chair Richard Krzyzanowski, Treasurer Kecia Weller, Commissioner John Troost as Chair of the Nominating Committee, and to Commissioner Ernest Hamilton, Jr. who was not present, as Chair of the Transportation Committee. Additionally, she awarded a service pin to Commissioner Harley Rubenstein for participating in all the Public Relations events and actively promoting the Commission.

Sandra Barbee, Chief of Commission Services, presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the Chair on behalf of Yvonne B. Burke of the Second Supervisorial District of Los Angeles County "in recognition of dedicated service to the affairs of the community and for the civic pride demonstrated by numerous contributions for the benefit of all of the citizens of Los Angeles County".

Vice Chair Krzyzanowski presented a Certificate of Commendation "in recognition of dedicated service to the affairs of the community and for the civic pride demonstrated by numerous contributions for the benefit of all of the citizens of Los Angeles County" on behalf of Supervisor Michael Antonovich of the Fifth Supervisorial District.

TREASURER'S REPORT

None

STAFF REPORT

Rosemary Osuna, Commission Staff, reported the following:

1. A draft of a booklet titled *Access to Resources for the Disabled* is in their Commissioner packets for their review and recommendations. She requested that they contact Staff for any additional or revised information that should be included.
2. The Commission's website has not been updated with their revised biographies due to technical difficulties.
3. She encouraged everyone with an e-mail address to include it in the sign-in sheet because the Executive Office is moving toward a paperless environment.

PRESENTATION BY MARIANA GITOMER, LOS ANGELES PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST, SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, AND CONNIE LOFTON, AREA WORK INCENTIVE COORDINATOR, SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Mariana Gitomer, Public Affairs Specialist in Los Angeles for the Social Security Administration, introduced a guest, Connie Lofton, Area Work Incentive Coordinator. Ms. Lofton spoke about the various incentives her office provides to provide employment to the disabled community.

Ticket to Work Program

The "Ticket to Work" Program is the centerpiece of the Work Incentives Improvement Act. It offers new incentives, such as expanded healthcare and benefits; supports and services for people with disabilities to achieve steady, long term employment. There is no cost for this service.

Ms. Lofton reported that:

- The average age of the disabled person is 51 years old. 57% are women and 43% are men. The biggest fear of returning to work is not the loss in benefits, but the loss in health coverage. Beneficiaries may continue receiving Medicare and Medi-Cal while on the Ticket-To-Work Program.
- The goal of the program is to have disabled beneficiaries earn enough money to be financially independent through employment so they do not need Social Security.

- Beneficiaries who are eligible for the program are between 18 and 64 years of age, receive a cash benefit, and their medical condition is not expected to improve.
- Once an individual receives a “Ticket to Work”, they will go to an employment network contracted by Social Security to get job coaching and all of the employment services they need.
- With the “Ticket to Work” program, the beneficiary receives a ticket when he/she meets outcomes and/or milestones. After receiving a ticket, he/she calls the program manager, Maximus, and then visits the Employment Network (i.e. Employment Service, Vocational Service, any service that enables one to earn money).
- The beneficiary receives nine months of cash benefits plus three grace-period months where earnings will not affect benefits.
- Under Social Security, a special rule extends Medicare coverage up to 93 months after the end of the nine month trial work period. Under SSI, health care coverage is provided through Medicaid.
- For every month a disabled person cannot work (or if earnings drop below \$900) benefits can restart without a new application.
- Social Security or SSI benefits that have ended due to earnings from work can be reinstated without filing a new application. Beneficiaries must be unable to work due to their medical condition. There is an optional six months of provisional benefits while Social Security evaluates their medical condition. The beneficiary may receive Medicare and Medicaid benefits during this period.
- For additional information, individuals may call (866) 889-4473

APPROVAL OF BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

Staff indicated that, according to the ordinance, an ordinance change is not required to have a Second Vice Chair. On motion of Commissioner Welt, seconded by Commissioner Siegel, and duly carried, the amendments to the Bylaws were approved.

MISSION STATEMENT

On motion of Commissioner Chambers and seconded by Commissioner Welt, the Public Relations Committee will prepare a draft mission statement and present it to the full Commission.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive Committee

- **2007 Access Awards Luncheon**

Chair Neal reported that she has been contacting several celebrity guests who may attend the awards luncheon.

- **Bill Tainter Scholarships**

Chair Neal reported that no applications have been received from the 4th or 5th Districts. The Commission would welcome recommendations from the Supervisors.

- **Radio Program- Disability Forum, KTYM 1460 AM
Aired on the third Wednesday of the Month from
9:30 AM to 10:00AM**

Maya Lee, County Counsel, explained that the contract with radio station KTYM will expire on July 30, 2007. County policy states that the new contract should be put up for bid so stations other than KTYM may have a chance to place a bid for the program. The bid will include components for streaming and closed captioning in the contract.

In response to the Commission's request that all bidding radio stations are inspected to ensure that they are ADA-compliant and that the Chair compile a list of requirements that the bidding radio stations must meet in order to have their bids accepted, County Counsel reminded the Commission that any added features would add to the program's expense and would affect bidding from the stations.

- **Community Services**

Chair Neal reported that she receives an average of five phone calls a week on Community Service/Human Services related issues, Social Security, Medi-Cal and Housing problems, which are all referred to her from the five Supervisorial offices.

B. Public Relations Committee

Commissioner Krzyzanowski reported:

- The Commission staffed a table at the Summer Olympics on June 16 and 17, 2007. Many contacts with allied agencies who are sympathetic and may support the Commission's were made at this event.
- He staffed at table at an event – "Transforming Our Communities" -- sponsored by the Department of Mental Health and several other County agencies.
- He attended a Spanish language "Hope and Recovery" conference sponsored by the Department of Mental Health and plans to attend the English language conference on Friday.
- He attended the Antelope Valley Community Resource Fair sponsored by the Department of Children and Family Services.

C. Transportation Committee

Teddie Joy Remhild wasn't present for her presentation but provided a written report to the Commissioners.

ELECTIONS

Elections were conducted by ballot vote. The following Commissioners were elected to office for the 2007 – 2008 term.

Commissioner Kecia Weller – Chair
Commissioner Janet Neal – First Vice Chair
Commissioner Harley Rubenstein – Second Vice Chair
Commissioner Richard Krzyzanowski - Treasurer

REPORT OF KURT HAGAN, ADA 504 COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Kurt Hagan from the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance, Disability Compliance Section, reported:

- He is not the ADA 504 Compliance Officer but a Deputy Compliance Officer. He also corrected the title of his office to Disability Civil Rights Compliance.

- His office is still in the process of doing compliance reviews for Animal Care and Control and Beaches & Harbors.
- Mr. Hagan is no longer acting as the ADA Coordinator for the Department of Parks and Recreation. The ADA Coordinator is now Patrice Sanders, who can be reached at (213) 738-2970.
- Gordon Anthony will be returning to the Office of Affirmative Action in the capacity of Special Assignment Deputy for consulting services on disability-related issues.

LEGISLATION

None.

ITEMS NOT POSTED FOR CONSIDERATION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Chair Neal would like to schedule a discussion about keeping Martin Luther King Hospital open for a future agenda and requesting support from the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Rubenstein proposed an item to be scheduled regarding the program called SNAP, an assessment program, regarding the emergency preparedness within Los Angeles County for people with disabilities. He would like to invite Allen Troy and John Woodburn, who are in charge of the program, to make a presentation before the Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Neal presented a brochure that she received from Sandy Driver Gordon on the Independence. She explained that Ms. Driver Gordon is willing to help with issues related to reasonable accommodation and special education.

She announced a “Jazz in American Culture” class listed in the Music section at Santa Monica College on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 9:40 p.m. The instructor, Leslie Tracy, was an original member of the musical group “Earth, Wind and Fire” and has a hidden disability.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion of Vice Chair Krzyzanowski, seconded by Commissioner Pomerantz, the meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Janet A. Neal, Chair
Richard Krzyzanowski, Vice-Chair
Kecia Weller, Treasurer
Mary Chambers
Donna Pomerantz
Harley Rubenstein
Bernard Siegel
Alexia Teran
John Troost
Wendy Welt
Sheila Wright
Wan Chung-Chang

Board of Supervisors

Sandra Barbee, Division Chief
Rosemary Osuna, Staff
Martha Arana, Staff
Audra Galang, Staff

Guests

Laura B. Ripplinger, Lifesigns, Inc.
Melodie Stuart, Total Recall Captioning
Sandy Eisenberg, Total Recall Captioning
Mariana Gitomer, Social Security Adm.
Connie Lofton, Social Security Adm.
Magda Carrero, East LA Regional Center
Jesse Padilla, East LA Regional Center
Ray Louis McKeever, Southern California Assn. of the Blind
Linda Block
Carolyn McDow

Excused Absence

Michael Gureckas
Ernest Hamilton, Jr.

County of Los Angeles

Royce Crowder, Sheriff's Dept.
Kurt C. Hagen, OAAC, Disability Civil
Rights Compliance
Susan Susman, Consumer Affairs
Dr. Dennis W. O'Brien, Client Coalition
(Consultant to the Governor)

MTA

Chip Hazen

ASI

Nicole Leiva
Luis Pacheco